Supporting Family and Friends with Addictions

by NEWLIFEOUTLOOK TEAM

The Important Role of Support for Addiction

Understand first that a person who does not want to recover might not be able to, and rehabilitation centers will only help those who want to get help. Dealing with an addiction can be difficult for everyone involved, but the support of close friends and family is an important part of recovering. To some, it may be the most important part.

Addiction Varies by Person

Every addiction case is different, caused or triggered by different things. Never assume that you know more than the individual about their problem, but remain open-minded and willing to listen.

Overcoming addiction may be a difficult and intimidating process, for some more than others, but never an impossible one. A good attitude is one of the best ways to support a friend or family member suffering from addiction.

Attempting to distance yourself from the problem or enabling it by pretending it doesn't exist will not help an addict .

Interventions

Interventions are often the first step along with allowing the addict to recognize their problem and admit that they have one. Family and friends often play a crucial role in the process of recognizing the problem, and thus the responsibility of intervening often falls to them.

After an intervention has taken place, some form of therapy or rehabilitation is usually recommended.

- Outpatient therapy refers to sessions that take place close to home and do not require the patient to be removed from their home or away from family and friends.
- Inpatient addiction treatment has the benefit of removing the addicts out of the environment enabling their addiction, but how can family and friends assist with recovery then?

While inpatients are not allowed to leave the facility while undergoing the recovery process, the people who know them are usually allowed visitation rights. They are often encouraged, as therapists also recognize how important a healthy support system can be to aiding recovery.

The Importance of a Support System in Addiction Recovery

Groups for families and friends of addicts may also be available in your area if you look around. These are places where you can share your experiences and often pick up helpful advice on coping and dealing with people who have addiction problems.

You may choose to continue attending meetings like this even after the main recovery process for the addict has been completed. Naturally, such meetings are also eligible for the attendance of the addict, should they chose to attend.

Be aware, however, that even after the patient is finished with their therapy or rehabilitation process they may not have fully "recovered." Addictions are difficult to overcome and desires to relapse occur at different rates in different people.

The involvement of family and friends remains important in breaking addictive cycles and has the important responsibility of learning how to avoid any enabling addictions and not encouraging destructive tendencies to resurface.